3: Holiday J-5 (ca. 1955) 1956 MS25 Tuareg MS25
Hoggar

eyes are probably descended from the Vandals who invaded north Africa some 300 years earlier. Legend, though not springing from the Tuareg themselves, suggests they grew out of a lost band of Crusaders that wandered into the desert after the Holy wars of the middle ages: a legend that draws attention to the Tuareg's use of chain mail and long two-handed swords and to his stature and Aryan features. The language of the Tuareg is called Tamahaq; their speech soft and guttural. In its written form, Tifinar, the alphabet is possibly that of the ancient Libyans. The hieroglyphics are utterly unlike Arabic and the construction of the alphabet is consonantal, a feature which makes the task of translation difficult. For many years now Dr. Wakefield, an Englishwoman, has been living in Tamanrasset making a study of Tamahaq and translating the Bible. It is already 8 years ago that the National Bible Society of Scotland published the Book of Ruth for missionary work among the Tuareg based on Dr. Wakefield's studies.

ⵜⴰⵙⵙⴰ ⵏⵉ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⴰⵜ ⵙ ⵜⴰⵎⴰⵃⴰⵇ

ⵜⴰⵏ ⵙ ⵍⵍⵉⵏ ⵜⴰⵙⵙⴰⵜ, ⵉⵎⵓⵔ ⴷⵉⵙ

The Bible in Tamahaq

(*Ruth. Ch.* 2, *Verse* 17)

"*So she gleaned in the field until evening, and when she beat out what she had gleaned, it was about an ephah of barley.*"

Again, the influence of such work is too limited at present to be a cogent factor. From the standpoint of religion the Tuareg reveal a strange mixture of paganism and lip-service to Islam. Literally, the word Tuareg—or, in its purer form Twarek—means "abandoned", i.e., the abandoned of God. To some extent the limits of the Tuareg domain are fixed by his superstitions; which have peopled areas like the Plateau du Tademait, north of In Salah and the mountains of Emmid-Din to the east of the Ahaggar with ghosts and djinns. The Tuareg are, above everything, religious opportunists; in that, like all superstitious people, they believe what suits them best. Unlike most other social groups they do not seem to have synthetised their beliefs or emotions into a set of religious observance that is a collective interest of the community. Marriage and divorce exist but, sexually, the tribe is a-moral and a feature of the social structure of the group is the "ahal", a love-feast at which the men serenade their chosen lovers, praising their beauty in terms of the moon, a flower or with images equally poetic and universal.

Tuareg society is matriarchal: another distinctive feature that sets them apart from the Arab world. Although authority appears to be invested in the male, in so far as tribal groups are administered by the Amenokal, or king, it is through the women that heredity is determined. The child of a Targui begotten by a woman outside the tribe will not be Tuareg; but a Targuia (Tuareg woman) who has a child by a slave, for instance, claims for the offspring direct Tuareg descent, though not necessarily in the same social circle. There are, in fact, several social strata within Tuareg society that have arisen through the centuries as a result of raiding for slaves; and also from the involved relationship between slaves and slaves, and masters and slaves since the children of some are free, while others are not; and the children of the second generation of some are free. These last are called "Hartanis", meaning literally, "free in the second generation (from "Harr"—free, "Thani"—second). The nobility of the tribe are known as "Kel" and the men can be distinguished by the dark blue veil. The serfs, although Tuareg by birth, wear a white veil, while the Hartanis, who are mostly of negroid descent, go unveiled.

Thus it is that a great many influences have combined to build up the tribe and, consequently, it is not surprising to find in their music certain similar incongruities.

5: Nicolaisen E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1959
MS25 Tuareg MS25
Ahaggar
Air

dominating an extensive area of North Africa and particularly in Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and adjacent regions before the Arab invasion of the 11th century A.D. This theory was set forth already by Ibn Khaldoun, who says that *Hoouara* has changed into *Heggar* (Ibn Khaldoun I, p. 275f.). Nicolas has stated as his opinion that this theory has no other foundation but mere speculation (Nicolas 1953, p. 14). This, however, is not correct as the relationship between the words can be explained on linguistic grounds as claimed by Foucauld. For the letter *ou* when redoubled will as a rule change into *gg*, and *ou* very frequently permutes with *g* (Foucauld 1951–52, II, p. 533).

The term used in Air for vassal Tuareg is *Imṛad* (sing. *Amṛid*), a word which seems to be known to all Tuareg. Foucauld gives no particular explanation of its meaning (Foucauld 1951–52, III, p. 1233f.). Nicolas claims the word related to *eṛeid*, literally meaning "a kid" (Nicolas 1950a, p. 189). If this explanation given by Nicolas is correct, *Imṛad* refers to goat-breeding. So does another term for vassals used more frequently among the Northern Tuareg and the Ioullemmeden, namely *Kel Oulli* (sing. *Agg Oulli*), which means literally "the goat people". In Air this word is never used as a term for the vassal class, but only as a proper name for one particular vassal clan attached to the Ikaskazan.

One of the terms for vassals and maybe both terms are thus connected with goat-breeding, while one of the terms for noble Tuareg seems to refer to raiding, which among the Tuareg was intimately connected with camel-breeding. Camels were not only the means by which raiding was carried out, but they were also the main object of raiding expeditions as they could be abducted very quickly from foreign camps. So we may perhaps see from some of the terms used for vassal and noble Tuareg that the two classes originated from the meeting of two distinct cultures, a goat-breeding and a camel-breeding culture. And we have already seen that in the past the noble Tuareg of Ahaggar were in particular camel-breeders, the vassals breeders of goats and donkeys.

The Ahaggar Tuareg – in contrast to the Tuareg of Air – have traditions about the origin of the class system. References to these traditions are common in literature (Benhazera 1908, p. 89ff. – Reygasse 1950, p. 88. – Foucauld 1951 – 52, II, p. 533ff. – Lhote 1955, p. 213ff. – Nicolaisen 1954, p. 99f.). There are in fact two conflicting traditions, but some Tuareg will nevertheless acknowledge both. It seems, however, as if one tradition had its origin among the nobility, the other among vassals. The tradition which originated in the noble class says that the dominant noble clans of Ahaggar had a woman named Ti-n-Hinan as their ancestress. She immigrated to Ahaggar from Tafilelt in Morocco together with her servant girl named Takama, who became the ancestress of the oldest vassal clans (the Dag Rali and the Ait Loaien). The two women were both Islamic and belonged to the Beraber tribes. They found the country uninhabited except for the higher parts of the massif, where a pagan people named the Isebeten lived. This tradition

114 /60 cont./ It would be impossible to praise too highly the work of the "hermit of the Ahaggar," for it has in a sense illuminated a civilization for history.

212 /61/ The peculiarity of Tamashek as a Berber language is that it can be written with its own characters, which are called "tifinagh."

194 There are 25 tifinagh characters, to which must be added compound letters formed by the combination of two simple elements.

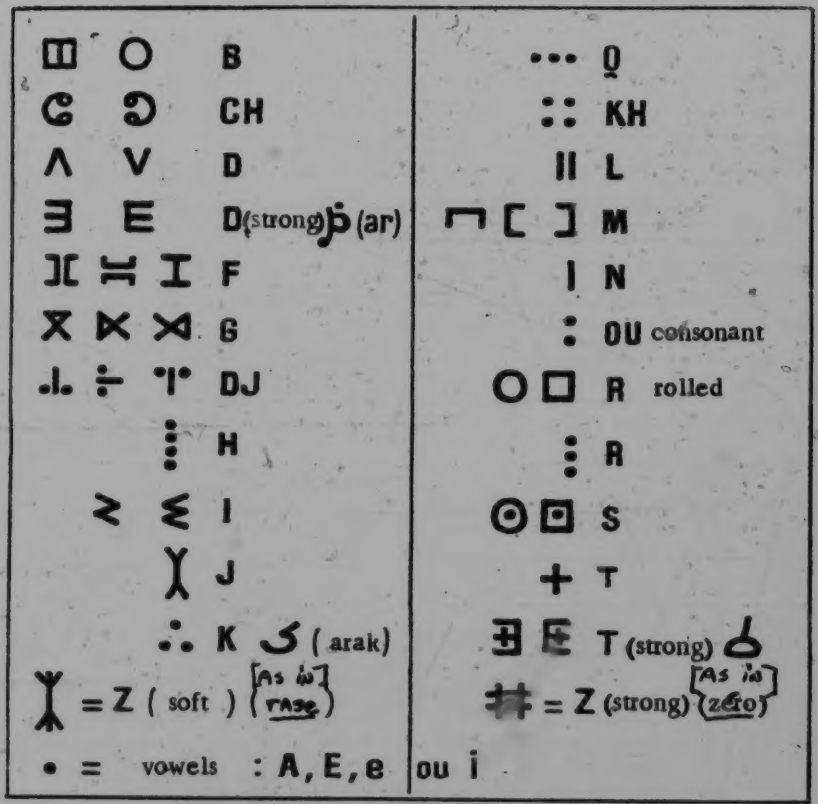


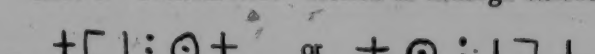
Table of tifinagh letters.

212
194

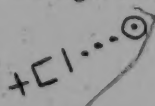
/61 cont./ Each letter represents a consonant of the language; a single sign at the end of a word indicates the vowel element. To write a word, all that need be done is to write its consonants one after the other, without attaching them to each other, in any direction one pleases, from left to right or from right to left, from top to bottom or else from bottom to top, according to the fancy of the writer. Some letters, such as the M, the G, or the strong D, indicate the direction of the writing.

All written letters are pronounced, with very rare exceptions.

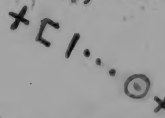
Here is "Tamanrasset" written in tifinagh characters:



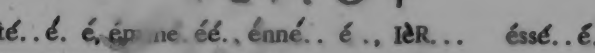
The way the prongs of the M point indicate whether to read from the right or from the left. The word may also be written:



or yet again



One may easily imagine that this writing without vowels is rather hard to read; it is necessary, in fact, to insert the vowels in their proper places as one reads. It is always an amusing sight to see a Targui deciphering tifinagh script; he mumbles to himself as he spells out each letter of a word until, /62/ saying it aloud, he identifies the word, realizes its meaning, and finally pronounces it with evident satisfaction.



Iété..é. é, én ne éé., énné.. é ., IèR... ésse..é.é. éTT.

This permits him to decipher: Tamanrasset.

This system of spelling makes reading a text a long and complicated proce , for one must remember the words that have been deciphered in order to reconstruct the sentence, otherwise one must begin all over again. A thorough knowledge of the language is indispensable for being able to place the vowels correctly and for avoiding misreadings.